The Sketch

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"I'M GOING TO GET LIT UP WHEN THE LIGHTS GO-UP."

ZOE GAIL, *recently seen in "Let's Face It," is a high light of* "STRIKE A NEW NOTE," *George Black's "rising generation" show at the Prince of Wales Theatre. Here she is, as the Man About Town, singing one of her big hits, "I'm Going to Get Lit Up." C. B. Cochran, writing to "The Times" about theatrical "finds," observes that she is the only player who has ever recalled to him the manner in which the inimitable Nellie Farren "put her songs over." Nellie Farren died in 1904—many years before Miss Gail was born—Hollingshead wrote of her, "She could play anything, dress in anything, say and do anything."*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROYE.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

My Song Goes Round the World. Some little time ago a well-known Brains Truster, who knew all the answers and who has had a larger public even than Professor Joad—his name was Aristotle—said that the ideal democracy was one in which a single orator could be heard by the whole people. In fact, I rather think, though I haven't looked him up on the point, that he said that that was the *only* kind of workable democracy. Now, in the Agora, I dare say that Demosthenes, despite his well-known habit of chewing pebbles, *could* be heard right in the back rows; I should think he had better voice-production than many of our public speakers, whose idea of oratory is mumbling to their lowest waistcoat button. But not even Aristotle, I suspect, ever imagined the possibility of a single orator addressing an audience from China to Peru. "Mr. Churchill's speech," I read, "went out 'live' to nearly every part of the Empire, including New Zealand and Australia, the Far East, India, the Middle East, Africa and Canada, and to the United States and South America. It was heard by the First Army in Tunisia and the Eighth Army on the Mareth Line. It was translated into 24 foreign languages, and these reproductions were broadcast throughout the night to all parts of Europe, including Germany and Italy."

Constable : "What yer doin' there ?"
Tramp : "Mr. Middleton says now 's the time to *pinch* chrysanthemums."

DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.

The Whole Hog. It is all very wonderful, and I find it also a little frightening. I am not quite reconciled to the idea of the world as a vast whispering gallery. However, there is always the Tower of Babel, which is getting some shocks nowadays, but is still fairly firm on its foundations. Mr. Churchill himself tells us that the next boon and blessing to men will be Television for All. All that is needed now is the energetic development of telepathy. I see that in a recent criminal trial they have been using a sort of brain-voltmeter, which registers your emotional reactions and fits of temper. In America, by ingenious use of the "lie-detector," they have confirmed what the Psalmist said in his heart long ago. One of these days the witness in the box will be put into a chromium-plated evidence-extractor, and the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth will come out on a tape. Another of these days, perhaps, all we shall have to do will be to "nobbut sit," and we shall be able (simultaneously getting creeping paralysis of the limbs) to hear, see and think everything under the sun, and possibly in the sun, too, and the moon and the stars. Ah, Brave New World!

The Drones' Club. But no! I am, like Mr. Nathaniel Gubbins's chatty friend in the pub, a liar. Mr. Churchill has sternly pronounced against "nobbut sitting." On the contrary, we must all be up and doing, as advised by the strenuous Longfellow. Up with the toilers and down with the drones! A very salutary sentiment, and I respectfully support it. But it all depends on what you mean by a toiler. I consider that I have been a toiler all my life—nobody has ever offered me the chance of being a Wodehousean drone, but I don't think I should be a success as a Catsmeat Potter-Pirbright. But I dare say my gardener, sweating over his spade, thinks I have a very cushy job all the time I am sitting at my desk. I have not met many real drones in my life. Everybody professes to hate work, but most people are bored without it. The English have the reputation of being a lazy people, but I never noticed that our so-called "leisured class" had as much leisure as they were supposed to have. I gather from the writings of such stern critics as Mr. J. B. Priestley that their life consists entirely of huntin', shootin', fishin' and goffin'—the rest bein' just drivellin'. That has not been my experience of them. I am constantly astonished by the amount of hard, indispensable and entirely unremunerated work which they do in the public service. However, I suppose we must hand all that over to uniformed officials and get it done "efficiently." The prospect chills me.

Ichabod! Why, they are even talking of sentencing the Diplomatic Service to hard labour, not to mention plain living and high thinking! This is really intolerable. My picture of the perfect diplomat is quite clear, and I have ample authority for it in innumerable books, plays and films. He is a person of distinguished appearance and ample means, looking rather like

The Ornithologist : "Well, now, fancy *pigeons* delivering your messages! I should have thought parrots *much* more suitable!"

DRAWN BY SILENUS.

THE FACTORIES REQUIRE YOUR WASTE PAPER URGENTLY FOR SERVICE NEEDS.

Mr. Monty Woolley. His manners are beautiful, and *of course* he is Eton and King's. He has no conscience whatever and very little intelligence ; and his principal qualification is a gift for telling lies smoothly and gracefully, and never giving a definite answer to anything. For the rest, he adorns drawing-rooms and dinner-tables, must have an infinite capacity for consuming champagne, and must know how to resist the arts of slinky Countesses in black velvet with an insatiable appetite for secret documents. These are the men who have played such a part in what are called the " Chancelleries of Europe," and it is now proposed to turn them into prosaic executives, who not only know their job, but *do* it—in short, little better than humdrum Civil Servants. There is, as they say in the R.A.F., no future in that. It is most discouraging to Eton and Harrow and Oxford and Cambridge, and it is going to cause a lot of unemployment. Personally, I believe in Social Security for diplomats. It is not sufficiently recognised, in my opinion, that even Ambassadors had mothers.

Smashing Service.

This enthusiasm for sweat of the brow can be overdone. Many of our devoted public servants, for example, are being grossly overworked. It is not long since Mr. Herbert Morrison made the startling statement: " We are not short of State departments. We are not short of Ministers." Not short !—when there are only a hundred Ministers out of six hundred Members of Parliament ! Anyhow, the Chairman of the Berkshire County Council has recently urged that it is high time we had another one. He justly observes that it is several months since this happened, and things seem to be getting slack. Mr. Loyd asks for a Ministry of Forms and Correspondence, and for the immediate appointment of a C.R.F.C.O., or Chief Regional Forms and Correspondence Officer. At present, he suggests, correspondence between Whitehall and a local authority is " very much like somebody who is practising a smashing service over the lawn-tennis net, with no one on the other side returning the ball." Let us therefore have a whole professional team to supply practice and exercise. It is an excellent idea ; but I am sorry to see that at the same time the Home Office is advising the Civil Servant " not to become a devotee of red tape." It is actually urging the official to " write in clear and simple language " and to " avoid stilted phraseology." This sort of thing is simply calculated to take the heart out of zealous bureaucrats. It isn't a smashing service at all, but a mere lob, which anybody can hit back — and surely that is not the idea of the game ?

Off-side.

There are, of course, ways of dealing with this national scourge short of a Ministry or of assassination. My own method has always been simple. I mark certain letters "G.T.H.," and my secretary knows that they stand for " Tell him to g.t.h.," and acts accordingly. What the initials stand for is my little secret, but you can have a guess, without extra charge. Another method would be to appoint a national referee, for this post I suggest the venerable and sagacious Mr. Will Thorne, M.P. When recently he thought that a certain speech in the House had gone on long enough, or should never have begun at all, Mr. Thorne blew a whistle and ejaculated " Off-side ! "—with very salutary effect. The method is admirable, and should be supplemented by a power to send the player off the field, by force if necessary, and to warn him off permanently for a second offence. Every member of a congregation, every guest at a banquet, and every listener to the Chairman's opening remarks or to the dialect stories of the Mover of the Vote of Thanks, should be provided with a whistle —and, if necesary, a rubber truncheon.

Wife : **" I had a five-inch high-water-mark painted on it at first, but I was convinced that Henry cheated ! "**

DRAWN BY A. E. BEARD.

The ex-Professor : **" My course, Sir, is about one inch to the left of W."**

DRAWN BY J. E. BROOME.

Growing Old Gracefully.

It is matter for congratulation that Mr. Thorne, at the age of 86, could serve so energetically and so usefully as the Referee of the House, especially as the Speaker is not allowed a whistle under the Standing Orders. We can all do useful work even at the age of 100, and I see that one centenarian, still going strong, has been explaining how to do it. Walk, don't smoke and don't drink, he says. Excellent counsel, no doubt, but I feel bound to record that the liveliest Methuselah I ever met, who nearly reached his century, not only smoked like a practice bomb and drank like a sponge, but for many years of his life took enough laudanum to kill a platoon. The other day there died, at the age of 92, a distinguished person, full of honours, and one of the finest instructors in his subject that I have ever met. To my certain knowledge, 35 years ago he was consuming not less than a bottle of whisky a day —and whisky was

[*Continued overleaf.*

Continued.]

whisky in those times. (I will give you one guess at his nationality.) I am not recommending saturation as the best preservative for a green old age—for most of us it would mean a short life and not too gay a one—but I suggest that there is just "no accounting" for folk in this respect.

Every Sneeze a Tank. Nor is there any accounting for colds, influenza, biliousness, neurasthenia, rheumatism and boils. I give this depressing list because it is selected for special displeasure by the Ministry of Health in its recent booklet about keeping fit. These ills that flesh is heir to, we are told, lose us 22 million working weeks each year. This loss "is calculated to be equivalent to 24,000 tanks, 6,750 bombers and 6,750,000 rifles, not to mention the pain and inconvenience we suffer as individuals." But I *do* mention the pain and inconvenience, and when the Ministry of Health tells me that colds and influenza are "preventable," I think I am entitled to ask, how? I have put this question to the medical profession before, and I don't seem to get any answer. All they can prescribe is a sober, righteous and godly life. Well, I am doing my best, but it doesn't seem to be an infallible cure. Hereafter, in a better world than this, it may work, but I don't want to wait till then.

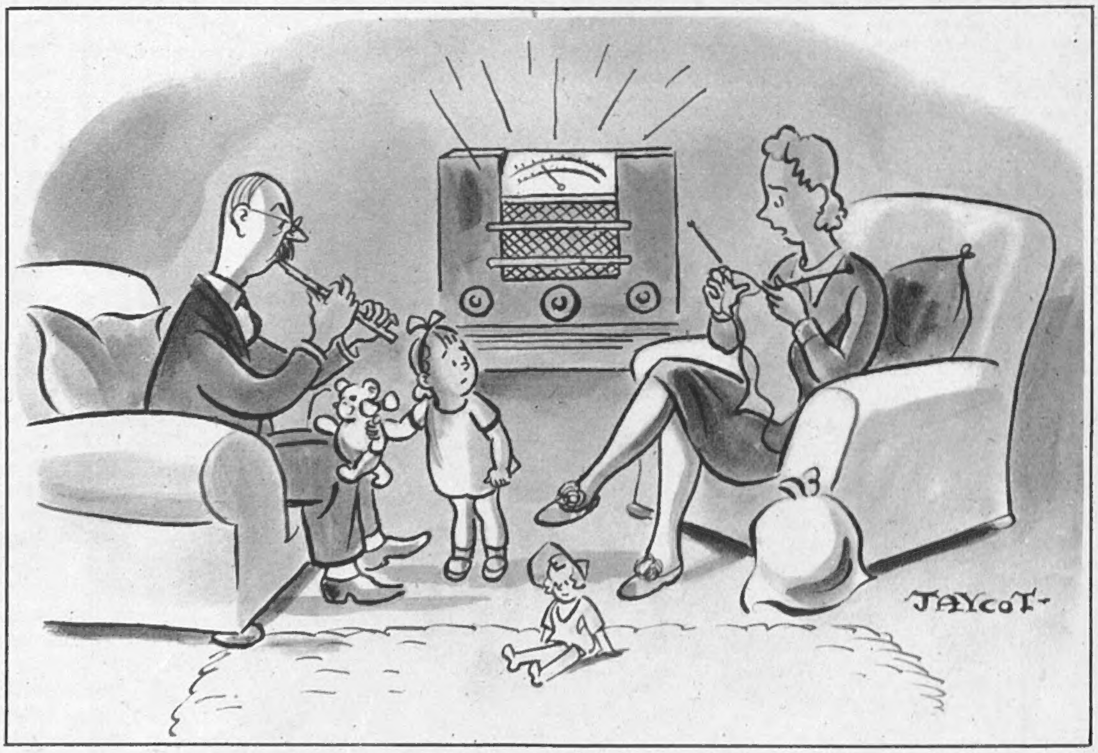
The torch-minded Lady: "Have you any No. 8's?"

DRAWN BY L. B. MARTIN.

Crackling of Thorns. I shall, however, be seriously tempted to hasten my departure if this world goes on getting more and more sinful. I am becoming deeply perturbed at the general decline in morals and at the cynicism which is being shown in high places. The other day Lady Astor gave utterance, in the House of Commons, to the following sentiment: "No man has any right to have a mistress." Now, I should have thought that any Member of Parliament in his constituency—say, opening a bazaar or laying a foundation-stone or addressing the Moral Welfare Association—would have applauded that sentiment to the echo. But what do I read in the parliamentary report? "Loud and prolonged laughter." A wink or two, or even an embarrassed giggle, one might have forgiven, by stretching a point; but loud and prolonged laughter! The crackling of thorns under a pot! It all confirmed what somebody once said so shrewdly—I think it was some chap in the Stone Age, but I have forgotten his name—viz., that the country is going to the dogs. I believe he added that things are not what they used to be, and he was quite right, because I cannot imagine this unseemly ribaldry in the days of Mr. Gladstone.

One up to Madame. They are very disconcerting, some of our feminine orators. Mme. Chiang Kai-shek got the American public in the solar plexus the other day when she said: "Mental indehiscence and mawkish maundry will not fit us for life." This sent a great many people scurrying to their dictionaries, and I confess I was one of them, because I am too old a hand to be caught out with "Daddy, what does indehiscence mean?" My dictionary behaved in a low and cowardly manner. It informed me that "indehiscent" meant "not dehiscent." After this blinding revelation, I had to look up "dehiscent," and I found that it meant "not opening spontaneously when ripe." A flower which refuses to become a flower is an indehiscent flower. I think it is a very good word, and I intend to use it freely in future. You hesitate to say of anybody who happens to disagree with you that he has a mind which is shut to all reason, logic, decency and common sense; but it is very convenient to be able to tell him simply that he is indehiscent, especially as he won't dare to admit that he doesn't know what you mean. And it sounds nasty, anyhow.

Emphatically! Our language is always being enriched by little bonuses like this. I notice that nothing is complete nowadays without "implementation." Then consider the number of ways in which affirmation may be expressed in our flexible tongue. You can say 'Um,' 'Huh,' 'Huhhuh,' 'Yum,' 'Yeah,' 'Yep,' 'Yass' or 'Yerss,' and very occasionally you will even hear somebody say 'Yes.' But all these are now *démodés*, and, as the Lord Chief Justice observed the other day, the only possible way of expressing even the mildest agreement is 'Definitely.' 'Your name is William Smith?' 'Definitely.' 'You live at 55, High Street?' 'Definitely.' It lends tone and colour to conversation, doesn't it?—and protects one from any suggestion of indehiscence.



Mamma: "Stop worrying your dad when he's playing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra!" (DRAWN BY JAYCOT.)

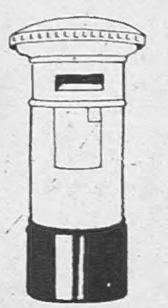
The sixtieth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"WE HAD IT DONE AS A SURPRISE FOR ROBERT, WHO IS RETURNING FROM THE EAST."

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—It has been One Of Those Weeks. It began on Monday morning when Charles woke up with sciatica and cut himself shaving, and Matins's and Evensong's relations telephoned to say they wouldn't be well enough to come back for some time. Then I pressed too hard on the cardboard stopper of the milk bottle and it exploded all over me, and Charles's Secretary, the beloved Miss K., telephoned to say her temperature was a hundred and one.

Charles, who had remained maddeningly calm throughout these crises, lowered *The Times*, which was propped against the tea-pot, and cocked an enquiring eye at me. "Do you think you can manage to lend a hand at the Surgery?" he said.

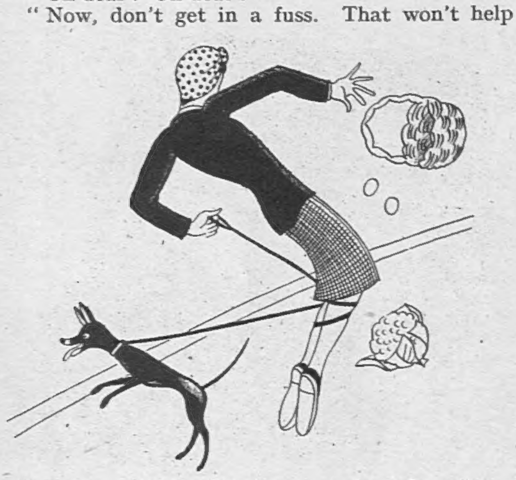
"Oh dear! Oh dear!"

"Now, don't get in a fuss. That won't help anybody."

"As a matter of fact, I feel as though I might be starting a cold myself."

Charles threw *The Times* on the floor. "I cannot have Illness in my Home," he said, in a despairing voice.

"There, there," I said, greatly cheered by this unusual show of feeling; "perhaps it is just an ordinary cold." Charles crammed his hat on his head and left the house muttering. I went upstairs to clean the bath. The bath has taken a long time to clean ever since we lent it to two Commandos, who stole the soap and left strange scratches all over the bottom and sides. Charles says they probably have to bathe in their boots, so as to be ready for any emergency. While I was hanging, face downwards and purple-faced, I felt a distinct shiver trickle down my spine, and wished, not for the first time, that we had a thermometer in the house. We have often talked about having one, but when I suggest going to the chemist and buying one, Charles always says, "Good heavens! I've got hundreds," but he somehow forgets to bring one home. I felt my pulse and thought it seemed to be going rather fast, but then it always goes fast after cleaning the bath, so I put Perry on the lead and went down the Street to do my shopping.



"Wound his lead twice round my legs."

On my way home I met the Conductor. What with his unofficial engagement to Faith and the ducks laying so well, he is a very happy man just now. As soon as he saw me, he put his hand in his pocket and fished out two eggs.

"You are the nicest man I know," I said, and stowed them away tenderly in my basket under a cauliflower.

At the bottom of our hill Perry saw a cat, uttered a shrill bark, wound his lead twice round my legs, and I fell down. The cauliflower shot out of my basket, the eggs followed, and with a sickening crunch broke on the pavement. Perry, who had slipped his collar in the confusion, pranced away with sprightly elegance down the road, while I sat up, and for the first time in fourteen years told him just exactly what I thought of him.

"Oh, poor Henrietta!" cried little Mrs. Simpkins, hurrying across the road and picking my cauliflower out of the gutter. "Oh, your poor cauliflower! And eggs as well! Oh dear, what a dreadful disaster!" Then she halted, frozen with horror at the stream of invective which was pouring from my lips, dropped the cauliflower in my lap and hurried away without a word.

As I arrived at Charles's Surgery I felt another distinct shiver down the spine, and wished again that I had a thermometer, and then, like G. K. Chesterton, who sat on the Sussex Downs and longed for a piece of chalk to draw with, I suddenly remembered that I was in the land of thermometers and searched about in the dispensary until I found one. *My temperature was a hundred.* "I *am* getting 'flu," I said to myself, and contemplated with equanimity the possibility of several days in bed.

"My temperature was a hundred."

"Are you feeling ill, Henrietta?" said Charles that evening, looking at me with disgust.

"I've got influenza," I said.

Once he has got over the first annoyance of Illness in the Home Charles is a very kind nurse, and he filled my hot-water bottle and tucked me up in bed, and even produced a thermometer from his bag and said I could keep it.

"You'll have to go to the Hotel for your meals, my poor Charles," I said.

"And who 's going to look after you?"

"I suppose if I pay you half a guinea a time you'll look in occasionally?"

Charles grinned. "I might manage it," he said, "but you ought to have somebody here all the time. I can't ask Lady B., because she's got 'flu herself."

Next day my temperature rose higher and higher and Charles produced a stethoscope. I said "ninety-nine," and took some medicine which made me sick. I told Charles there were kinder ways of getting rid of a wife than by slow poison. The day after, Charles said he was going to try and get me a nurse. He came back looking pleased and saying he'd managed to get hold of one and she'd arrive that afternoon. A few hours later the door opened and a clean white apron and a cap came quickly and quietly into the room. I said, "There are crumbs in my bed," and burst into tears. Then I got under the bed-clothes, because I don't like to be seen crying, even by strangers.

The Nurse made kind noises, I was rolled over on my side, the crumbs swept from under me and the sheet pulled tight. Then I was hoisted back on to my pillows by strong young arms, and a basin held under my chin for me to be sick into.

"You are very kind," I said weakly.

"Not at all," said a familiar voice, and I looked up to see the Linnet smiling down at me. "Linnet!" I said.

"Nurse to you, please," said the Linnet.

I struggled to sit up. "Now, let it be clearly understood, Linnet," I said, "I will not be given a Blanket Bath by you."

"You'll be given what the Doctor orders," said the Linnet, putting a finger on my pulse and producing a peculiar-looking watch from a pocket underneath her apron. "How do you like your M and B?"

"So that's what it is! I thought your Papa loved another."

The next day I began to get better. I stopped being sick and sat up and took notice. There was quite a lot to notice. I was attended by a perfectly strange young woman, who moved noiselessly about the room, washed me, fed me, tossed me about in bed as though I were a baby, and came in with hot drinks during that horrible hour just before dawn. Then, one day, when my temperature was normal, she took off her cap and ran her fingers through her curls.

"Ah," I said, "you are the Linnet. I thought you must be a figment of my fevered imagination."

"You haven't any fever now," said the Linnet. "Did I seem so different?"

I sat up in bed. "Well, you see—I've been longing to say this to you, Linnet, but I couldn't while you had your cap on; you and Bill have always seemed to me rather casual sort of children—*absolute* darlings, of course, but a bit lazy, if you know what I mean, and rather dirty and untidy in the house——" My voice trailed away as I saw the Linnet smiling.

"Bill's Colonel wouldn't have written that lovely letter, and they wouldn't have kept me at Hospital if we were like that. It's just that Home is the place to relax in. Rather bad luck on parents, but there you are." Then she kissed me. "Home means a lot to us, you know, especially these days," she said.

"There was quite a lot to notice."

I'm never going to grumble about housework again, Robert.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend, HENRIETTA.

WIVES OF HEROES OF THE R.N., THE ARMY AND R.A.F.

MRS. RICHEY *is the wife of Wing Commander P. H. Richey, D.F.C. and Bar, author of best-seller war book "Fighter Pilot." She is a daughter of Sir Roy Lister, married Wing Commander Richey in 1939, and has two daughters,* ANN *and baby* PAULINE.

MRS. TANYA PITT, *wife of Lieut. Arthur John W. Pitt, R.N., captain of the submarine "Taku," which has been described as Britain's most relentlessly-hunted submarine, with* NATASHA, VALERIE *and baby* DAVID. *Lieut. Pitt's portrait appears in "Hats Off."*

MRS. TANYA PITT *is by birth American, and first met her husband in Malta when she was only sixteen. She was married shortly after. She is the mother of three small children, and works at the American Red Cross Club in London.*

LIEUT.-COMMANDER RICHARD B. STANNARD, V.C., R.N.R., *won his V.C. while serving (as Lieutenant) in H.M.S. "Arab" at Namsos in 1940. He is with* MRS. STANNARD *and his two little daughters,* JEAN *and* DIANA, *during a recent spell of leave. He is a son of the late Mr. George Davis Stannard and was born in 1902. His marriage to Miss Phyllis May Tomkin took place in 1928.*

MRS. GEORGE DONNO, *posed with her daughter* IRENE, *is the wife of Rifleman George Donno, K.R.R.C., who has just been awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in Tripolitania. When working on a radio transmitter, he changed the batteries while lorries, set on fire by German tanks, were blazing furiously nearby. Rifleman Donno was a chimney sweep.*

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

It is not every film director whose name becomes part of the currency of our language. We do not, for example, speak of a "typical George B. Seitz situation," or describe an atmosphere as being "genuine Sam Wood." Yet Mr. Seitz has been directing pictures for twenty-nine years, and Mr. Wood, whose record can be little, if any, shorter, has handled some of the biggest stars in the almanac, and been responsible for films that have even romped home with Motion Picture Academy awards. We do, however, speak naturally of a "Hitchcock suspense," and might well say of some peculiarly macabre incident in our private lives that it has "the real Hitchcock feeling." This is a distinction that Hitchcock has earned by filming the same type of story, with increasing authority and remarkable success, for eighteen years or thereabouts.

Hitchcock's films are melodramas with deliberately commonplace, everyday backgrounds. He has been said to have a ghoulish mind, but what interests him is not the horrors themselves, but the shocking impact of horror on security. He likes to make you feel that, contrary to popular belief, your next-door neighbour is not a stockbroker, but a murderer. He likes to remind you that if you take that twopenny bus ride down to the shops you may quite possibly never reach your destination. The schoolboy in the front seat, carrying a brown-paper parcel, he suggests, isn't *really* carrying a brown-paper parcel, but a bomb. One of Hitchcock's favourite stories has always been the odyssey—the eventful journey of the hero either in pursuit of, or pursued by, enemies. Fugitives of any sort are his delight, and he is never happier than when he can describe a cross-country chase, with secret agents all along the road, and skin-of-the-teeth escapes at every corner.

The new Hitchcock film, "SHADOW OF A DOUBT" (New Gallery and Tivoli), is a variation on the heroic odyssey. The hunted man, played by Orson Welles's Joseph Cotten, is obviously a wrong 'un from the start. We see him first, sprawled on his bed in a cheap New York lodging-house, smoking a large cigar and ruminating. Beside him, scattered banknotes lie haphazardly about the floor. Down in the street two men are watching the house; two patient men with their hands in their pockets. The thinker on the bed gets up and telephones.

Across the continent, in a small house in a small town in California, the Newton family receive a telegram announcing a visit from their Uncle Charlie. Uncle Charlie arrives. He is mother's younger brother, a big business executive, it seems, from the east. The young Newtons have never seen him. But *we* have. . . .

Uncle Charlie makes a great hit at first with his relations, being naturally handsome, debonair and amusing. It is quite some days before his elder niece (Teresa Wright), affectionately named Charlie after him, begins to worry over little things she has noticed. Why does Uncle Charlie dislike the "Merry Widow" waltz so much? Why does he tear up father's evening paper? Why does he give her an emerald ring with strange initials inside it? Why won't he meet those two nice men who have come to ask questions for a Government survey of the typical American family? Young Charlie, being the innocent type of blossom that simply asks for murder, goes straight up to Uncle Charlie and says, playfully, "I have a feeling there's something secret about you. I'm going to find it out." And, by jingo! she does.

"Shadow of a Doubt" seems to me the best Hitchcock there has been since "Rebecca." The exuberant director is perhaps a little quieter than usual. There are none of those violent effects—the shot of an engine whistle cut sharply to a woman's screaming mouth—with which he has startled us in the past. But his interest in the technique of realism shows no signs of let-up. It's overlapping conversations now, multiple sound, something in the Orson Welles manner. More and more he is trying—and more and more, I think, successfully trying—to emphasise the ordinariness of the ordinary, so as to get the full thrill of the thrill.

Although I seem to be in the minority amongst my critical colleagues, I thought that Deanna Durbin's new film, "THE AMAZING MRS. HOLLIDAY," showed the star to better advantage than any piece she has made since she grew up—if stars do grow up, that is to say, just like ordinary people. Not only has she been allowed to sing two of the simple melodies she does best—"Mighty Lak a Rose," and that lovely Viennese air Kreisler used to play, "The Old Refrain"—not only does her voice sound impeccably sweet and true, but her acting seems to me to have gained in warmth and a certain quality of firmness.

She isn't as gay as she used to be, perhaps, the Deanna of "The Amazing Mrs. Holliday," but then "The Amazing Mrs. Holliday" isn't exactly a gay story. For the first time the star has been taken away from her Cinderella rôles, and even allowed to come up, to a certain extent, against the realities of life. She appears as a mission school-teacher who has escaped from China with nine small charges, orphans of Japanese bombing. To give these children a home in America, she pretends to be the widow of a rich Commodore Holliday, supposedly lost at sea. The Holliday relatives, outraged but helpless—for Deanna has a fluent witness in the ship's steward (Barry Fitzgerald), who is ready to perjure himself over the captain's marriage—receive the widow and orphans into the Holliday home, the sort of house where the family sits down to dinner in formal evening-dress and works decorously through the courses with eight pairs of table utensils.

It is only a matter of time, of course, before the masquerade is discovered, and it makes for heartbreak, as well as embarrassment, that it should be discovered by the Commodore's grandson (Edmond O'Brien). This scrupulous young man loves his grandmother—loves her very much indeed—but feels he must do his duty by his family. His idea of doing his duty is to adopt the children at 500 dollars per head, but to send the widow packing to Philadelphia. A sudden change of heart, due to Deanna's rendering of "The Old Refrain," and the even more sudden return of the Commodore from the dead, makes him revise his plans. As I left the theatre, the somewhat tricky matrimonial situation was about to be regularised by a Justice of the Peace, or it may have been a minister.

The story isn't a great one, as you can see, but it has its points. The scenes with the children are rather touchingly done. Young Mr. O'Brien is no Adonis, but has a rugged, tough style some will like. Young

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

**Adelphi: "THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

***Aldwych: "WATCH ON THE RHINE." Diana Wynyard, Anton Walbrook, Athene Seyler, Margaretta Scott. Anti-Nazis in the U.S.A.

*Ambassadors: "A LITTLE BIT OF FLUFF." Revival with Henry Kendall, Chili Bouchier, Olga Lindo.

***Apollo: "FLARE PATH." R.A.F. "ops." Adrianne Allen.

**Cambridge: "HEARTBREAK HOUSE." Revival—Robert Donat, Edith Evans, Isabel Jeans, Deborah Kerr.

*Coliseum: "IT'S FOOLISH, BUT IT'S FUN." Revue with Nervo and Knox.

**Comedy: "MURDER WITHOUT CRIME." Raymond Lovell and an excellent cast.

***Duchess: "BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward's play. Kay Hammond, Cecil Parker.

*Garrick: "BRIGHTON ROCK." Graham Greene's novel dramatised, with Hermione Baddeley.

**Globe: "THE PETRIFIED FOREST." Owen Nares, Constance Cummings, Hartley Power in Robert Sherwood's entertaining play.

**Haymarket: "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA." Vivien Leigh in a Shavian revival. Well cast.

**Hippodrome: "LET'S FACE IT." Bobby Howes, Pat Kirkwood, Joyce Barbour. Cole Porter music.

*Lyric: "WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS." Revival with Irene Vanbrugh, Nicholas Hannen, Barbara Mullen, John Stuart.

**New: BALLET. Robert Helpmann, Margot Fonteyn and the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

**Palace: "FULL SWING." Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert at their best.

**Palladium: "BEST BIB AND TUCKER." Tommy Trinder and Co. again.

*Piccadilly: "SLEEPING OUT." Farce. Gene Gerrard, Ellen Pollock, Gus McNaughton.

**Prince of Wales: "STRIKE A NEW NOTE." George Black's new revue, with the rising generation.

*Princes: "OLD CHELSEA." Richard Tauber; Carole Lynne; Charles Hawtrey; in romantic musical.

**St. James': "A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY." Turghenev's comedy perfectly done, with Michael Redgrave, Valerie Taylor, Ronald Squire.

**St. Martin's: "CLAUDIA." Pamela Brown and Hugh Sinclair on an American farm.

**Saville: "JUNIOR MISS." Comedy with the accent on youth. Joan White, Peggy Cummins.

***Savoy: "THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER." Brilliant boorishness by Robert Morley.

**Strand: "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE." Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

*Vaudeville: "MEN IN SHADOW." Sabotage in France. John Mills.

*Westminster: "HEDDA GABLER." Ibsen revival with Sonia Dresdel and Walter Hudd.

*Wyndham's: "QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre, to avoid disappointment.

Miss Deanna is definitely ageing, and looks all of twenty-one, but she still isn't too decrepit to walk about and sing a lullaby with a husky infant in her arms, or to take a cracking good shot at the difficult "Visi d'Arte" from "La Tosca."

M.-G.-M.'s "Keeper of the Flame" (Empire, April 9) stars KATHARINE HEPBURN *as Christine O'Malley, widow of a famous democrat who has been killed in a car crash.* SPENCER TRACY, *as newspaper man Steven O'Malley, wants to write the great man's autobiography;* RICHARD WHORF *as Clive Kerndon tries to kill them both, to hide the fact that the dead man used his fine reputation as a cover for subversive activities.*

Unlike most film titles, the title of "I MARRIED A WITCH" (London Pavilion) means just what it says. The piece, directed by René Clair from one of the Thorne Smith fantasies, is really about a man who marries a witch. The man is Fredric March, and the witch is Veronica Lake—that is to say, she's Veronica Lake when she bothers to have a body at all and doesn't just flit about from place to place as a puff of smoke or on a broomstick.

"China Girl" (Regal) is Twentieth Century-Fox's tale of the Burma Road. Johnny Williams (GEORGE MONTGOMERY), *American newsreel cameraman, prisoner of the Japs, is offered freedom if he will photograph the Burma Road for them. Miss Young* (GENE TIERNEY), *Chinese patriot, dies in his arms after an air raid. Other stars are Victor McLaglen and Lynn Bari.*

The film begins in sixteen-ninety-something, when the current Fredric March, a Puritan in a stove-pipe hat, burns a beautiful young witch after what seems to have been a somewhat dubious encounter in a hay-barn. Naturally, she curses him, as any high-spirited girl might have done in her place. And two-hundred-and-something years later she comes back to fulfil the curse on the Puritan's great-great-whatever-it-is grandson. The new, modern Fredric March, an engaged man and a candidate for State Governor, is considerably embarrassed by the witch's attentions. Her idea is to make him fall in love with her, and, never the type to do things by halves, she brews a love philtre to this end. Unfortunately, by accident she drinks it herself, and, after that, there's no holding her.

Since no wise man, and certainly no electoral candidate, struggles for long against a girl who knows a trick or two *and* looks like Veronica Lake, our Puritan and our witch eventually marry and settle down. She undertakes to give up witchcraft after the election, and go in for cooking and good works. Her father (Cecil Kellaway), a disreputable sorcerer who has been around the place for eight thousand years, is securely corked up in a brandy bottle, where he can do no harm. It *seems* all right. It *is* all right. Or is it all right? The Governor and his wife have an elegant home, lead an irreproachable domestic life and are the parents of two fine, well-mannered boys.

But the little girl, the baby, turns out to have quaint, old-fashioned ways. They just *can't* stop her riding on a broomstick.

"I Married a Witch" is a bright, not a brilliant film, which proves that René Clair still knows how to have his fun. It hasn't the delicate flair of the director's early French pictures, nor quite the tang of "The Ghost Goes West." But it is brisk and unusual. The cast has been chosen well. The trick photography is intriguing, and some of the lines have quite a turn of wit.

Another famous French director—Julien Duvivier—has made a Hollywood come-back this week. Or shall we say, rather, a Hollywood *half*-come-back? "TALES OF MANHATTAN" (Warners and Regal) repeats the formula of Duvivier's celebrated "Un Carnet du Bal," without quite achieving the same distinction.

Steven persuades Christine, who tries to keep her dead husband's activities secret, that the story must be told and his character exposed.

"Un Carnet du Bal," you'll remember, presented a series of short dramas, some grave, some gay, connected by the device of an old ball programme. "Tales of Manhattan" has its diverse dramas too. There are five of them, each one with its own particular cast of Hollywood stars. So scintillating are some of the names, indeed, so high their box-office rank, that the picture seems reluctant to let them go, expanding a brief sketch considerably beyond its dialogue or material.

The film concerns the adventures of an evening-dress coat, which is handed on from Boyer to Fonda to Laughton to Robinson to Robeson, and finally ends up on a scarecrow. Originally, in the days when Charles Boyer wears the coat to go courting Rita Hayworth, a married woman, and gets shot for his pains, there are trousers attached. But this nether half gets lost somewhere between Boyer and Fonda. After a time the coat, too, begins to lose its first bloom. It serves Fonda, who merely carries it, well enough for a wedding comedy sketch with Ginger Rogers and Roland Young. But it splits on Charles Laughton, when he tries to conduct his own symphony in it in a New York concert hall. Edward G. Robinson is down-and-out anyway when he borrows the coat to attend an old college reunion. In the fifth and last episode, it isn't the coat itself that matters so much as the gangster's loot found crammed into the pockets.

"Tales of Manhattan" is a big film, rather than a great one, but there is some tale in it for every member of the audience. My own taste, perhaps, is for Mr. Robinson's tale, which includes a favourite actor of mine, George Sanders, and has pretty suspenseful moments. The Robeson episode, set in a coloured shanty-town community, seems oddly adjusted to the rest of the film, but has the benefit of some magnificent singing from Paul Robeson and the Hall Johnson choir.

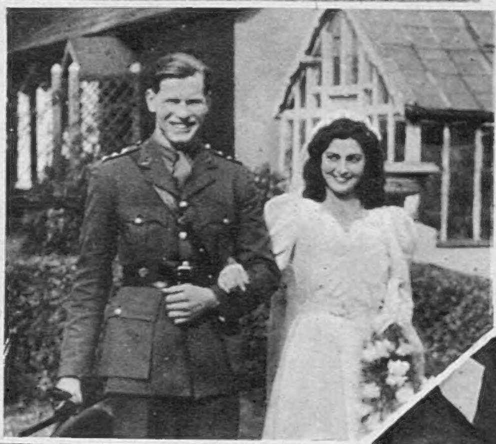
"No Time for Love" (Plaza, April 9). CLAUDETTE COLBERT *as Katherine Grant, newspaper photographer, goes mud-crawling to get snapshots of the sand-hogs, or diggers, in the Vehicular Tunnel.*

Romance ends the bickerings between Katherine and Jim Ryan (FRED MACMURRAY), *one of the tunnel diggers, who refuses to be photographed, though she finds him admirably photogénique.*

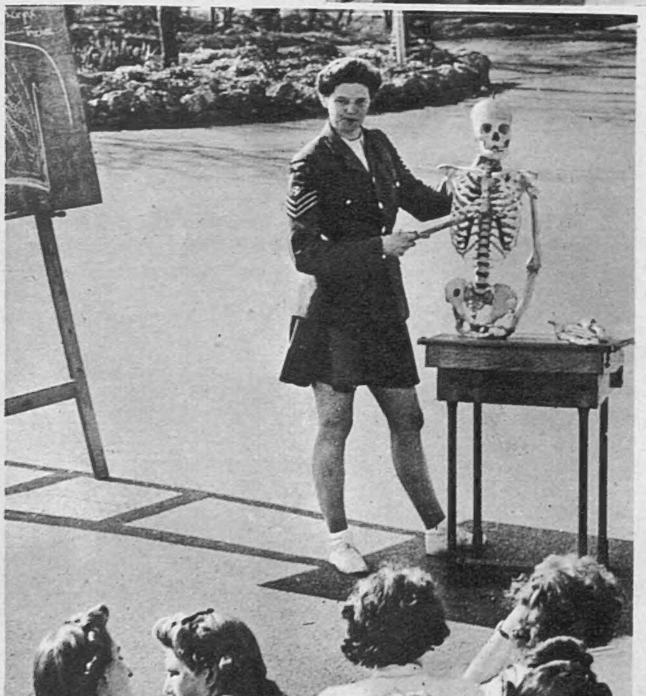
A new film of the famous B.B.C. BRAINS TRUST, *with* SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE *as one of the members, is being made at Elstree. Here Sir William is submitting to a final touch of make-up from expert hands.*

Right: This snap of DAVID BERNARD MONTGOMERY *is on its way to General Montgomery, under the Y.M.C.A. "Snapshots from Home" scheme. David has received from the Prime Minister a portrait of his father which the General handed over when Mr. Churchill was in Africa.*

Passing-out parade and inspection of an O.T.C. at the M.T.C. H.Q.: CORPS COMMANDANT MRS. PEAKE, ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD EVANS, K.C.B., D.S.O., AIR VICE-MARSHAL SIR LESLIE GOSSAGE, K.C.B., D.S.O., *and* CAPTAIN MISS HENDERSON, M.T.C. *(l. to r. in front).*



Right: The marriage of CAPTAIN R. J. F. WHISTLER, *Royal Corps of Signals, to* MISS D. F. M. FERNANDES *took place recently at St. Mary's Church, Farnborough.*



Anatomy is one of the subjects which selected W.A.A.F. personnel training as potential instructors at a W.A.A.F. School of Physical Training have to study. Here is a lesson in progress.

When Napoleon's invasion plans were shattered at Trafalgar, celebration flags were made by John Edgington. To-day the firm still makes flags—as well as doing other sterner war work. This girl is preparing Nelson's "England Expects" signal.

PERSONALITIES OF THE WEEK—HERE AND IN THE U.S.A.

W.A.A.F. AIR AMBULANCE ORDERLIES *are now to have flying kit and flying pay. They are volunteers for the special duty of going by air in urgent circumstances, and wear battle-dress, flying jackets and boots.*

MR. OSBERT LANCASTER, MR. VIVIAN PITCHFORTH, A.R.A., *and* MR. JOHN PIPER *acted as Selection Committee for the Eleventh Civil Defence Artists' Exhibition, which Mr. Bertram Cruger opened at the Cooling Gallery.*

Left: The engagement of MISS SELINA GIBSON, *only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gibson, of Deramore Park, Belfast, to Squadron Leader F. Catling, R.A.F.V.R., oarsman son of Mr. and Mrs. Catling, of Worthing, has been announced.*

MISS HELEN JACOBS, *the well-known American lawn tennis player, is in the* WAVES. *She is reporting for duty to* LIEUT. HELEN SHUEY, *Senior Officer at Hunter College.*

MISS PAMELA COBBOLD, *daughter of Colonel and Lady Blanche Cobbold, married* LIEUT. VERNON HOPE-JOHNSTONE, *Grenadier Guards. The attendants were* PHILIPPA *and* NICHOLAS HUNLOKE *and* PATRICK COBBOLD.

MME. CHIANG KAI-SHEK *is seen arriving at Wellesley College, Mass., to address the student body of her Alma Mater.* LT.-COM. M. McAFEE, *director of the Waves, on leave as President of Wellesley, and* MR. L. K. KUNG *are l. and r.*

CAMERA PARADE OF PEOPLE AND THEIR DOINGS.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

LIEUT. A. J. W. PITT, R.N., *of H.M.S. "Taku"—for being Commander of the most relentlessly hunted submarine in the Navy.*

H.M.S. "Taku," commanded by Lieut. A. J. W. Pitt, R.N., recently arrived in this country after a year's success in the Mediterranean. She has the distinction of having had more intensive chasing from the enemy than any other British submarine. Her most recent escape was in the Ægean Sea where, except for a half-hour on the surface, she had to submerge for thirty-six hours, following the sinking of a supply ship. Before returning to base she sank a swastika-flagged ship loaded with German soldiers.

ACTING SQUADRON LEADER P. C. PICKARD, D.S.O., D.F.C.—*for being the first airman to be awarded the D.S.O. three times in one war.*

FILM-STAR PRIVATE FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW—*for tackling his potatoes like a good little Lord Wooltonian.*

FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW, the Hollywood "David Copperfield," has joined up, and has to do "chores" like the rest. He is now at the Basic Training Centre of the American Army Air Force, near Fresno, California.

ACTING SQUADRON LEADER P. C. PICKARD, D.S.O., D.F.C., sets up a record by the award of three D.S.O.s in one war. His second Bar to the D.S.O. was awarded last month. His first Bar was awarded after No. 161 Squadron, which he commanded, carried the parachute troops in the Bruneval attack last year. He was the pilot of "'F' for Freddie" in "Target for To-night."

MR. YEHUDI MENUHIN *(seen with Leslie Howard)—for his generous gesture in flying over here to make a £20,000 musical contribution to charities.*

MR. YEHUDI MENUHIN recently flew to this country from America to give his services at public concerts and to play to Servicemen and war workers. During his short visit, paying all his own expenses, he has made £20,000 in box-office receipts, the whole of which is being devoted to various charities.

THE Motion Picture Academy at Hollywood has awarded GREER GARSON and JAMES CAGNEY the "Oscars" as best actor and actress of 1942, she for her performance in "Mrs. Miniver" and he for his acting in "Yankee Doodle Dandy."

CAPTAIN NEVILLE CRUMP, *i/c "Golden Miller" tank—for taking his fences as easily as did the famous "National" winner.*

CAPTAIN NEVILLE CRUMP, peacetime racehorse trainer now serving with the Royal Armoured Corps, is O.i/c the Crusader tank "Golden Miller," named after Miss Dorothy Paget's famous, faultless winner of the 1934 Grand National. He crashes his jumps in a way that looks bad for the enemy! The snapshot was taken at an advanced training centre, where units rehearse for the forthcoming offensive.

GREER GARSON *and* JAMES CAGNEY—*for being the best screen actor and actress of 1942.*

ENGAGEMENTS—ANGLO-AMERICAN AND ALL-BRITISH —OF THE DAUGHTERS OF TWO FAMOUS FAMILIES.

LADY SARAH SPENCER-CHURCHILL, *eldest daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, is engaged to Lieut. Edwin F. Russell, R.N.V.R., eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Lucius T. Russell, Beverly Hills, California.*

LADY BARBARA MONTAGU-STUART-WORTLEY, *daughter of the Earl and Countess of Wharncliffe, Wortley Hall, near Sheffield, is engaged to Mr. David Cecil Ricardo, Lieutenant, 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, only son of Major and Mrs. L. F. Ricardo, of Waterside, Lingfield, Surrey.*

TWO important engagements were recently announced, on the same day—those of Lady Sarah Spencer-Churchill to Lieut. Edwin F. Russell, R.N.V.R., and of Lady Barbara Montagu-Stuart-Wortley to Mr. D. C. Ricardo. Lady Sarah Churchill, a relative of the Prime Minister, is twenty-two years of age, and had a brilliant coming-out ball at Blenheim, in 1939, when the palace built by Vanbrugh for the great Duke of Marlborough was floodlit. Since the war she has been working in a munition factory, and is now on another job of national importance. Her marriage will not be the first Anglo-American alliance in her family, as her grandmother was a Vanderbilt, and, as everyone knows, the Prime Minister's mother was one of the beautiful Misses Jerome from the U.S.A.——Lady Barbara Montagu-Stuart-Wortley, who was born in 1921, is the third of Lord and Lady Wharncliffe's four daughters, and has been serving in the Women's Land Army.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY YEVONDE AND BASSANO.

TH
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PRIVATE MARY CATERER, *formerly a pianist, plays the side drum. She is engaged to a Commando instructor.*

LANCE-CORPORAL E. R. TARRANT *(twin), formerly a hotel clerk, plays the side drum and baritone instrument.*

PRIVATE ADA ELIZABETH TARRANT *(twin), formerly a lady's maid, plays the bass drum.*

PRIVATES B. HOPKINS, D. MARTIN *and* L. BUTCHER *with their bugles. They played in a Salvation Army band before joining up.*

PRIVATE ROMA ALEXANDRA HELSEY, *of Newdigate, Surrey, who plays the bugle and the cornet.*

PRIVATE ANNIE COX WRIGHT, *who plays the bugle and the trombone,*

PRIVATE KATHLEEN VIOLET T. NOBES *(née Brencher), formerly a typist. She plays the side drum and bass instrument.*

PRIVATE ROWBOTTOM, *whose marriage to Stoker Tidbold was fixed for April 3.*

CORPORAL ELSIE MAY BOWSKILL, *formerly a store supervisor, plays the side drum and bass instrument.*

DRUM-MAJOR LORNA SMITH, *fo*
shop, plays a bass inst

THE smartness and general exc
band roused great admirati
during the " Wings for Victory " W
contingent of A.T.S. girls in the
was formed in 1941, and when the
career, under Junior Command
Brigadier Stebbings, only two
practised every day in their spare
ment by voluntary subscription,
to give a good account of thems
part in a church parade after onl
are the official A.T.S. band, mu
The twenty-four-year-old Drum-M
style, wears a scarlet sash. Now
band, and all the girl musicians
The new band is trained by Band
Morris, of the Royal Welch Regi
teen of the A.T.S. bandswomen.
a relative of Pipe-Major Ross, has

PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAK

N.B. A Coloured plate is inserted in this issue.

HE
E GIRLS
E WAR
GONE!

nerly a clerk in a Bond Street ment in the brass band.

ence of the A.T.S. drum-and-bugle when it was displayed in London ek pageantry, when it led the large rch through the City. This band rls first embarked on their musical Angela Stebbings, daughter of them could read music. They me, raised money for their equip- d in six weeks' time were able es. They even managed to take three weeks' practice. Now they in demand for special parades. or, who throws the staff in correct has been decided to form a brass e practising in their spare time. rgeant-Instructor David William at. Our photographs show nine- rivate Florence Agnes Scott Ross, ed the pipes since she was twelve.

FOR "THE SKETCH" BY FOX.

PRIVATE DOROTHY JOHNSON, *formerly a Civil Servant, plays the tenor drum.*

LANCE-CORPORAL LILIAN SKINNER, *formerly factory supervisor, with her side drum.*

LANCE-CORPORAL DOROTHY MAY SKINNER *(née Bacon), formerly a clothing examiner, plays the side drum.*

SERGEANT G. E. HEDDERLEY, *formerly supervisor in a chain store, plays the bugle and euphonium.*

PRIVATE MABEL ROSE FORDER, *formerly a domestic worker, plays the bugle and the flugel.*

PRIVATE EDITH LORD, *from near Manchester, formerly a machinist, plays the bugle and the cornet.*

PRIVATE FLORENCE AGNES SCOTT ROSS, *formerly a clerk. She plays the bugle and cornet.*

PRIVATE BARBARA MARY ROSANNA DICKINSON, *formerly a shorthand typist, plays the bugle and cornet.*

PRIVATE MARION HARTLEY, *formerly a factory worker, plays the bugle and the cornet. She was a Salvationist.*

FRESH FIELD! SID OF "STRIKE A NEW NOTE."

As Slasher Green, of the Elephant and Castle; Sid Field in "A Discovery."

"Little Ball's Going Ta-Ta": in the golfing scene, "Following Through."

"The Blizzard of the Bells": Sid Field in a fine bit of fooling.

IN "STRIKE A NEW NOTE," at the Prince of Wales Theatre, George Black promised London a show by the rising generation, and he kept his word. The cast consists of a number of clever young people, many of whom have been enjoying success in Greater London, but have, until now, remained unknown to West End playgoers. SID FIELD, the comedian, is one of these. He is a grand laughter-maker. He was the subject of tremendous encomiums in "The Times" the other day when C. B. Cochran wrote to register two theatrical finds—Sid Field and Zoe Gail (who is pictured on our front page).

PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE SKETCH" BY ROYE.

"Where are you, Clifford?": Sid Field as the melancholy boozer.

RECONNAISSANCE IN NORTH AFRICA.

Below the interminable rolling clouds of the North African sky, GENERAL ANDERSON, *G.O.C. the First Army, and a* BRIGADIER, *surveyed enemy territory in Northern Tunisia from a tactical point of view. They were visiting the forward position of a well-known County regiment. Against the vast panorama of the North African countryside the two figures seem minute, but they are full of significance for the future; and since the photograph arrived, the First Army has captured Sedjenane, taking prisoners, mopping up pockets of resistance, and generally "smoking out" the enemy.*

"SHADOW OF A DOUBT"— NEW HITCHCOCK THRILLER.

Hunted man in a cheap New Jersey boarding-house, Uncle Charlie (JOSEPH COTTEN) thinks out his next move and decides to "go to ground" by visiting his sister in Santa Rosa, California.

"You will have my daughter's room, here, during your visit": Joe Newton (HENRY TRAVERS) welcomes his brother-in-law. Ann (EDNA MAY WONACOTT) and Roger (CHARLES BATES) gaze at their new uncle.

"The men from the Government": Young Charlie (TERESA WRIGHT) introduces Graham (MACDONALD CAREY) and Saunders (WALLACE FORD) to her mother (PATRICIA COLLINGE). Uncle Charlie looks suspicious.

"I don't want you here, Uncle Charlie": Young Charlie, having guessed the grim secret of her uncle's criminal activities, tries to induce him to go away.

Saved in the nick of time: Young Charlie is the victim of an attempted murder. Her evil uncle has locked her in the garage with the engine of the car running, but the family return in time.

"SHADOW OF A DOUBT," Alfred Hitchcock's new Universal picture, came to the Tivoli and the New Gallery on March 28. The story deals with the activities of Charlie Spencer, murderer on the run with his booty. He takes refuge with the respectable family of his sister, Emma Newton, who welcome the advent of their charming Uncle Charlie. Young Charlie is devoted to him, and when the detectives come she is up in arms—but gradually the shadow of a doubt becomes certainty, and she knows he is a murderer. She tries to get him away to avoid a scandal, but fails, and is nearly murdered herself. A surprise solution ends the story.

"Go away! Go away!" Young Charlie mutters to her Uncle Charlie as she comes round. She knows that he has tried to kill her with the exhaust gas from the car engine.

LILLI PALMER as Czech refugee Erna.

JOYCE HOWARD as the Colonel's daughter.

JOAN GREENWOOD as spoilt Betty.

JOAN GATES as Gwen, the Cockney waitress.

BARBARA WARING as domineering Joan.

JEAN GILLIE as good-time girl Dot.

ROSAMUND JOHN as Scottish Maggie.

"THE GENTLE SEX"—THE A.T.S. AT WORK AND PLAY.

Hot mustard foot-bath after the first route march: Betty is second from left, with Gwen and Anne also in the group.

Maggie (right) is amazed by the elaborate night toilette of Dot. Gwen is acting lady's maid.

A bad quarter of an hour: Betty, Gwen and Dot await with some misgiving their appearance before the Training Camp Selection Board.

Kitting parade. The new recruits line up for issue of equipment. Joan and Dot are filling their kitbags with their new possessions.

Erna and Joan, ambulance drivers on stand-by call during a night blitz at a gun-site.

"THE GENTLE SEX," Two Cities-Concanen-Leslie Howard production, produced by Derrick de Marney, is due for its world première at the Odeon Theatre, Leicester Square, to-morrow, Thursday, April 8, when all proceeds will be given to the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund. The picture opens with the departure of seven girls to join up. They are Czech Erna, Army-family Anne, spoilt home-girl Betty, self-confident Cockney Gwen, hard, bumptious Joan, good-time lovely Dot and serious Scots Maggie. They begin their new life together, and their reactions in training camp and on duty are admirably presented. Life is tough at times, but there are merry moments, and the development of the girls' different characters and their various romances and adventures provide drama, humour and pathos.

Maggie is entertained by a young soldier during a journey by train after a long and tiring convoy trip.

SHAW'S DISCURSIVE "HEART-
STAR CAST DRESSED

Ellie Dunn (DEBORAH KERR), *the intense young girl disillusioned by discovering that Hector Hushabye is a married man, steals out to sit with Captain Shotover* (ROBERT DONAT) *in the garden.*

The shipshape house in which Captain Shotover lives
" The Times " critic as

THE brilliant cast of " Heartbreak House," at the Cambridge Theatre, presents Shaw's " fantasy in the Russian manner on English themes " just as he probably intended it, with a splendid sense of enjoyment. First performed at the Court Theatre in 1921, this period piece, with its introspective, egotistic, bourgeois-Bohemian characters is great fun, with Robert Donat a fine Shotover, if one can believe that it

[*Continued opposite.*

Mrs. Hushabye, naughty, busy, peers out into the dark garden to see if millionaire Mangan is anywhere about.

Planes throb overhead as the inhabitants of Heartbreak House sit in the garden talking inconsequently. L. to r.: Mrs. Hushabye, Ellie Dunn, Captain Shotover, Hector Hushabye (VERNON KELSO), *Mazzini Dunn, the failure* (J. H. ROBERTS), *Randall Utterword* (FRANCIS LISTER), *and Lady Utterword.*

"BREAK HOUSE" WITH A
BY CECIL BEATON.

his anything but shipshape life is well described by "pleasantly like a Tissot."

Mrs. Hushabye (EDITH EVANS), *glamorises the air raid to her sister, Lady Utterword* (ISABEL JEANS): *"There was a sort of splendid drumming in the sky."*

Mrs. Hushabye: "It's splendid. It's like an orchestra. It's like Beethoven!" Left to right: Boss Mangan (GEORGE MERRITT), *Mrs. Hushabye, Mazzini Dunn, Lady Utterword, Ellie Dunn and Hector Hushabye. Tense, expectant and thrilled, the party waits to hear the dropping of the first bomb.*

Continued.]
really is Robert behind that hirsute growth! Edith Evans's rich sense of humour and humanity suit the part of Hesione Hushabye perfectly; while Isabel Jeans is gently authoritative as Lady Utterword. Deborah Kerr is a "find" from the films in the part of the young girl whose romantic dreams are shattered; George Merritt's big business man touches a topical chord; and J. H. Roberts as his dupe has charm.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CECIL BEATON.

The splendid beard, bushy eyebrows and shock of hair worn by Captain Shotover cleverly hide the well-known features of film-star ROBERT DONAT.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

I AM too late to recommend "Channel Packet," which has already gone into three impressions; but not too late, I hope, to praise it, rapid as is nowadays the disappearance of any book which endears itself to the public. One's reasons for liking a book do not always really explain why one likes it; one may like it as one likes a person, for some temperamental affinity or—a baser reason—because one agrees with the author on a number of important points. I do not always see eye to eye with Mr. Raymond Mortimer; I think, for instance, that he is inclined to be too critical of the Victorian age, too indulgent to ours, and that he gives to certain developments in science, especially medical science, a higher place in the scale of human values than they deserve. He brackets stupidity with ill-will as the main obstacle to human progress, whereas I believe we are in as much danger from the clever as from the stupid. Moreover, he seems to me to take too rosy a view of human nature. He roundly condemns misanthropy in one of his favourite writers, Proust, and he is honestly shocked by "Beachcomber," who "finds himself trapped in a civilisation he finds entirely detestable"—a position, surely, that deserves more sympathy than censure.

An Impartial Critic. But I have a reason for admiring "Channel Packet" which is independent of its intrinsic and indefinable readability, and of the pleasure that comes from contact with an alert, sensitive, civilised and naturally discriminating mind. An intellectual, the literary editor of a weekly with a very marked character and point of view, Mr. Mortimer might easily be a dispenser of coterie judgments whose nature could be guessed before they were uttered. But he is not. He has his prejudices, and they affect his tone of voice and manner of approach; but they do not affect what he says. His critical judgments are superbly impartial and disinterested. Admiration never blinds him to an author's faults. He says that Mrs. Woolf's influence on the novel was unfortunate, and that Lytton Strachey's sense of drama occasionally impaired his historical accuracy. Nor does general distaste for a writer's work blind him to its merits. He finds Charles Kingsley unreadable as a novelist and unsympathetic as a man; but he praises him for "his splendid indignation against those who neglected so grossly the public health." Even Mr. Ezra Pound, whom he trounces unmercifully, gets a good word for his verse; even Mallarmé, whom he idolises, "can be held to typify in his ivory tower a bourgeoisie appalled by the ludicrous and visible consequences of its own greed."

Mr. Mortimer does not countenance the kind of criticism that sees in a writer's work a reflection of his social position or psychological idiosyncrasies. The only propaganda in this collection appears in his nostalgic tribute to France, "Souvenirs d'un Touriste," where it is most excusable. Elsewhere he pursues the truth for its own sake, undeflected and unseduced by any form of *trahison des clercs*.

French Influence. In the main his enthusiasms are under the control of his critical faculty. There is something French in the quality of his mind, in the ease with which it goes to the heart of the matter, in its power to summarise, to "isolate the enough," and to compress a comprehensive critique of an author into a few pages—for only his essay on Mallarmé runs to more. His gift lies in analysis, perhaps, rather than in suggestion; he is definite and uncompromising, and though he sees both sides he never suspends judgment. Sometimes we wish that his criticism was a little more wilful and intuitive, instead of being so closely guarded by his reason; and that he had not so resolutely put away childish things; he is impatient of the adolescent and the immature, of which there is much in English literature. There is sometimes a case for the things he dislikes; there is seldom a case against the things he likes. Nor does he let himself be too rigidly bound by the logic of his own taste. He is eclectic; he can enjoy writers who beat the big drum, like Macaulay and Balzac, as well as more exquisite practitioners of their art, Landor and Virginia Woolf. And though wistfulness is not his characteristic mood, he can be wistful.

Letters to a Friend. "No Music in Particular" is a collection of letters written to Mr. Christopher Sandeman by a correspondent who died in the autumn of 1941. He was then fifty-eight, and the friends had been exchanging letters for forty years. Mr. Sandeman tells us that his friend was a very shy man who loathed the limelight, and he would not have published these letters, even anonymously, if their chief interest had been personal. This intriguing "X" reveals himself as a man of prodigiously wide reading, a bibliophile with a fine collection of first editions, a lover of music, especially opera, a great traveller, a collector of china and jade, an accomplished linguist, an ornithologist, but pre-eminently as a botanist. "I am eagerly watching the post," he writes, "waiting for your first botanical letter with your first impression of the Flora Peruviana!" The names of flowers play the same part in his letters that the names of human beings do in other people's. But even about flowers he could hardly be called a gossip; he takes them too seriously for that. Referring to some American's wish to forsake America for England, he asks:—

How can a man who is devoted to plants and nature turn his back upon that glorious country? How can he leave the scarlets of the maple-woods in autumn and the white cornel foaming through them in spring? If manor house he must have, and some must (though I detest the churchyard things myself and have always preferred the warmth of towns), why not one of those gracious virile Georgian houses with their white pilasters and deep verandahs in Virginia? And what a natural flora! The woods full of Cypripediums, Atamasco lilies dotting the grass, and great patches of the rose Pogonia along the river. And *real* birds, cardinal birds, and mocking birds, and a wealth of water-birds, ibises, bitterns and herons. No need to have things crouching at you from the Caucasus all over the place, pecked at by our own poor drab fauna that the poets praised because they'd never seen the real thing.

Flowers and People. I cannot remember that any human being stimulates "X's" pen quite as does this vision of American flora and fauna. Had people interested him more he would possibly have travelled less. But this does not mean he is uninteresting about them; on the contrary. Owing, it seems, to a too self-critical spirit, he hardly wrote anything for publication: the words withered on his pen. Strange; for one great charm of his letters is their complete spontaneity, the headlong rush of his thoughts across the page. He described himself "as too weak a character to be influenced by anyone," but this is a trait that does not appear in his letters, which breathe a kind of happy confidence, equally free from arrogance or pedantry. You could not call him a high-brow, yet the acquisition of knowledge and the pursuit of aesthetic experience were perhaps his chief objects in life. He felt for these the passionate, disinterested enthusiasm of Browning's Grammarian. A member of an old Catholic family, but in religious matters something of a sceptic, he belonged in spirit to the eighteenth century; and it is the culture of that century, humane, unself-conscious, encyclopedic, which lives again for us in these delightful pages.

Between rounds the men who out-manœuvre Rommel—GENERAL MONTGOMERY, *Commander of the Eighth Army, and* GENERAL SIR BERNARD FREYBERG, V.C., *Commander of the New Zealand Division, attended an Army concert in the desert. Note the fly-swatter as symbolical!*

A Military Fantasy. "Ticky" is an allegorical fantasy of army life at some unspecified period in the reign of Queen Victoria. Hardly anything in it, one might safely say, is true to history, though some of it is true to life; it is perhaps the most completely escapist novel that the war has produced. The "Bloods," a crack regiment, are stationed in a building that bears some resemblance to the Crystal Palace. The officers live in unparalleled luxury, cared for by the "waiters," an indescribably down-trodden body of men with hardly any social status or amenity of life except one—the Pleasure Gardens they hold by right of an ancient charter. But the Charter has been lost and the Colonel of the "Bloods," long covetous of the waiters' plot of ground, has decided to annex it.

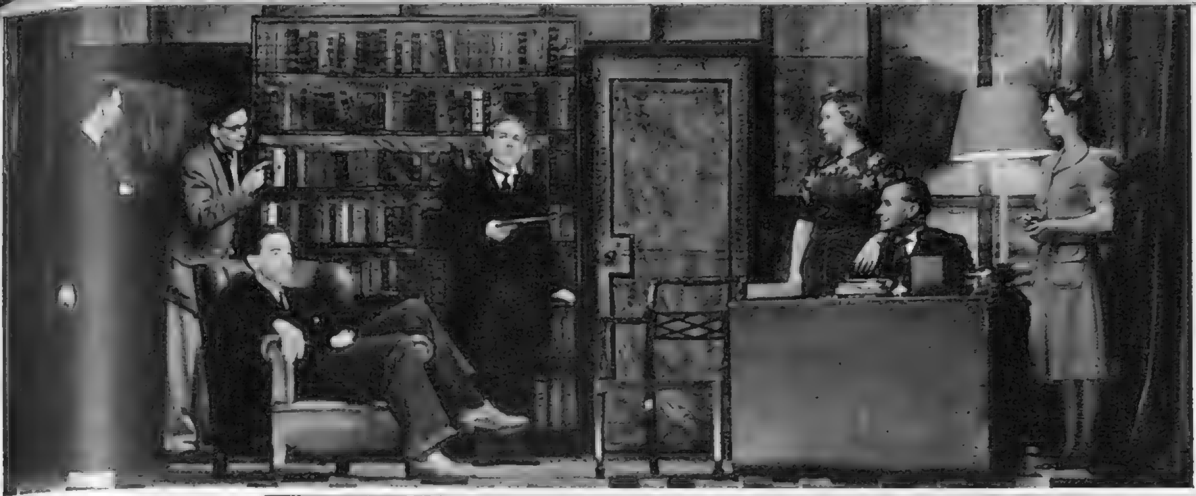
The plot of the story centres in the struggle for this Naboth's vineyard, though there is a love-interest in it, too. I cannot say that Miss Stella Gibbons maintains the excitement of her fantasy without any *longueurs*, but on nearly every page there is something to make one laugh, and the author's understanding of human nature never deserts her.

More than a Social Solecism. At best, murder must be regarded as a social solecism, an example of boorish bad manners, but when "Death came softly" to Valehead it spoilt something more precious than the fabric of polite society, for the gracious Italianate house, sheltering in its Devon valley, was a symbol of beauty and content. Yet before the tragedy came there were rifts within the lute; some of Eve Merrion's guests liked her too well to be on good terms with each other, and her jealous sister, Emmeline, would have been a stormy petrel in any company; and on the night when Eve's father, the eccentric professor, died, there was much marching and counter-marching on the moors. So the glimpse of idyllic happiness breaks up, and Inspector Macdonald must begin his familiar routine with its menacing hint of final punishment. The puzzle is not one which stretches the powers of Mr. Lorac's subtle and well-mannered detective to their full extent; and he solves it with a despatch that involves considerable personal risk.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Channel Packet. By Raymond Mortimer. (*Hogarth Press*; 12s. 6d.)
No Music in Particular: Letters from a Friend. Edited by Christopher Sandeman (*Macmillan*; 15s.)
Ticky. By Stella Gibbons. (*Longmans*; 7s. 6d.)
Death Came Softly. By E. C. R. Lorac. (*Collins*; 7s. 6d.)

"INTERFERENCE," BY THE R.A.F. SOMEWHERE IN SCOTLAND.



Above: Press reporters (FLYING OFFICERS DUNNETT *and* SCOTT) *are trying to interview the eminent surgeon, Sir John Marley* (WING COMMANDER W. J. SCOTT), *while Faith Marley* (BARBARA COLLINSON), *Barbara, his niece* (MARY HARDING), *and Douglas Helder, Barbara's fiancé (in armchair),* (SQUADRON LEADER CORY) *look on in amusement. Childers, the butler* (FLYING OFFICER BARRACLOUGH), *is holding the letter tray.*

Above: Deborah Kane (JOYCE MARCOU), *scheming but attractive woman, has welcomed back her old lover, Philip Voaze* (SQUADRON LEADER ARMSTRONG). *He turns up drunk. The maid* (SECTION OFFICER H. RITCHIE) *leaves in disgust, but Faith Marley, betrayed years ago by Philip, and blackmailed by Deborah, gazes out of the window in despair.*

Above: After the murder of Deborah: (l. to r.) Sir John Marley, Sergeant Cleaver (FLIGHT LIEUT. HARDING), *the Porter* (FLIGHT LIEUT. BURNINGHAM), *Detective-Inspector Haines* (FLIGHT LIEUT. A. G. SMITH) *and Dr. Puttock* (SQUADRON LEADER ANDERSON) *with the body.*

The finale: Sir John and Faith (left) and Mrs. Rooke (JEAN SCOTT) *and Helder (right) see Detective-Inspector Haines arrest Philip Voaze for the murder of Deborah.*

"INTERFERENCE," three-act drama by Pertwee and Dearden, was recently produced somewhere in Scotland by the officers of an R.A.F. Flying Instructors' School, assisted by their respective wives. The performances were in aid of the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund and good audiences showed their keen appreciation of the show. Many of the actors had had considerable experience of amateur dramatic work, and the standard of acting was first-class. Effective scenery and "props" were arranged by Flight Lieut. W. Sykes and the play was admirably produced by Flight Lieut. G. W. Keedle.

BAD LAD.*

By NORAH BURKE.

EVE KENNEDY was a faithful wife until she met Peter. That 's not to say she was dumb or dull. Anything but. Imagine a skin really golden with sunburn—if you looked close, you could actually see atomic flecks of gold—and she had greenish eyes, and chestnut hair that lolloped as she moved.

Besides, she knew how to dress herself. When she first met Pete Richards, it was at the Officers' Club in Carchester, and she was wearing a pinkish candy-striped thing, scooped in to the waist, and pink lipstick.

"Come on out and help me make sure my car 's immobilised," said Pete, as he took her arm in the friendliest way, linking her fingers in his.

Eve was not quite sure about that, but she was too polite to disentangle herself, and far too kind-hearted.

The car was locked all right, but Pete unlocked it and said "They 're dancing at the 'George.' Shall we go?"

"Why, that 's very nice of you. Thank you. But—what about your petrol?"

"I 've got enough, and very soon we shan't have cars any more. Do come."

"Well, thank you. But——" Her voice was awfully attractive. even after you knew the huskiness came from too many cigarettes. "This is only a cotton frock."

"You know perfectly well no one dresses. Do come. Or don't you like me?" Which was disarming.

"Of course I like you. I 'll have to get my coat."

"I 'll get it for you."

"You can't go in the Ladies' Cloak Room."

"You 've no idea what I can do!"

As he put on her camel-hair coat, his hands rested a moment on her shoulders.

"Have you got to ring anyone up to say you 'll be late?" he asked close to her ear.

"Shall I be late? No, there 's no one. I 've got my P.G. listening for the babe, anyway. We take it in turns, hers and mine."

"You 've got a kid, then?"

"Yes, aged three. If it wasn't for her I 'd be away doing proper war work instead of messing about with knitting and sewing, and two cushy nights a week at the canteen."

"And where 's your husband?"

"Well—on the coast, within range of German guns. I can't have the child there."

Five minutes later they were dancing at the "George."

"Eve, I like you. What a pity you 're married!"

"I shouldn't have thought that made any difference to chaps like you!" she countered, laughing.

"How d 'you know what kind of chap I am?"

"You can't hide it. Your eyes have got a twinkle in them that says Bad Lad Number One." Besides, he was so nice—especially in khaki—tall and casual, he must find it easy to get off.

"Well, well, you sound as though you 've had lots of experience, Eve, if you can recognise a bad lad at first glance like that!"

"Besides, who else could have got my coat for me as you did? I suppose you gave May a look out of those long-lashed eyes of yours and she got it for you?"

"May?"

"Oh, I forgot!" Laughing. "You 're pretending not to know her! That 's one of the rules, isn't it, Pete? Never mention another woman's name to the one you 're with." He couldn't help smiling, and she added, "There, that proves you 're a scamp. How old are you? Twenty-two. You know too much for twenty-two, Pete." But she, being married, wouldn't have liked him so well if he hadn't.

He drove her home, and in the road outside her house: "This seems a pity. Sure you 'll be all right?" He was half-turned to her, an arm on the back of the seat she was in. She knew he wanted to kiss her. Wanted it badly.

She kept her eyes straight ahead. "Yes, I 'll be all right."

"Eve——"

Then she looked at him. For a moment in silence their eyes locked. She made up her mind.

The least movement towards him was enough. In a moment his arms were round her, his lips on hers, as he must have done to a hundred other girls. Five minutes ago she hadn't meant this.

She thought, *There! I 've done it,* and the oddest part of it was there wasn't a single thrill in it. Not one. Although Pete knew all about kissing.

How often—how often in the five years she 'd been married had she imagined another man kissing her and been thrilled and tempted by the idea, but now that the war had brought it to her, she was cold and unmoved.

That 's because we came to it too quickly, she thought. *Even for wartime. After all, I only met him to-night. He doesn't mean a thing to me. That 's why.*

On her mouth he said, "Let 's drive on somewhere."

"No, I don't think I 'd better."

"Well, when am I going to see you again?"

Heaven, how was she going to extricate herself from all this? "Oh, some time."

"Look, I can't to-morrow, I 'm orderly dog. The next day? Are you doing anything?"

"No." She never had been able to lie.

"At the Club, then. I 'll be waiting for you."

After he 'd left her, she went in and upstairs, uttering a small swear for each step she trod.

"I bet Pete hasn't got any feelings to *be* hurt." It wasn't fun, either, this sense of shame. "I just shan't go, that 's all. Then he 'll know——"

And she thought, *Why, I didn't even get a kick out of it. Not a single one. He might have been made of wood for all I cared.*

It was the second evening after that, just about the time she would have been setting out to meet Peter, that she got the first thrill out of the kiss she 'd had two nights ago.

"Lord, what a blasted little fool I am," she muttered at her shoe, swinging it from crossed knees as she sat. "I know and remember perfectly well that when it happened it didn't mean a thing, and now just because I can't have it, I begin to want it like hell."

But she could be as cool and logical as she liked with her brain, it didn't stop her heart moving every time she thought of that kiss. Nor in the days that followed did it stop a pang every time the 'phone rang.

But the 'phone was never Peter.

The worst time was from five to seven in the evenings, because he was most likely to ring up then, she reckoned. And she would sit trying to read, while her heart hurt so much she had to press her fist on it.

After five years married, she 'd almost forgotten what it 's like to listen for a 'phone that won't ring.

If I go on like this I shall be in love with him.

Well, there was a cure for that—a modern cure.

She said savagely, "I 'll get this out of my system if it 's the last thing I do. I 'll get over it with a party."

She went to her room and took out her newest frock. She got a pair of stockings from her store. And her tiny black shoes with *Fabrication Française* written on the instep inside in gold.

Pete happened to be in the bar of the Club when she came into it, and their eyes met with a shock. He was looking as nice as ever, and he was alone.

His eyes accused her. "What 'll you have? They 've only got beer."

"Then I 'll have beer, please. Sorry I couldn't make it that night."

"Why didn't you come?" He was watching her speculatively.

"Well, I am married, aren't I?"

"It 's wartime."

"Yes," she said. "It 's wartime," and her eyes met his.

Eyes can say a lot, and theirs said everything.

She was just thinking, *I haven't lost him after all,* when the door clicked and a girl came into the room. Her hair hung like a heavy gold sari to her shoulders. Eve knew her well: she was a widow, she could do as she liked and she did.

She came straight up to Pete, and it was perfectly clear they had met here by arrangement, even before she said, "Ready, Pete?"

He—even he—looked faintly uncomfortable. He turned to Eve. "We 're dancing at the 'Four Feathers.' Why don't you get one of the chaps to bring you along?"

"No, I can't," she smiled brightly. "It 's my canteen evening," she lied—she who had thought she couldn't lie. It wasn't well done, and she saw he knew it for a whopper.

"Bye-bye, then," said the girl.

"Bye-bye."

Eve sat there turning her glass round and round on the counter, going hot at the heart for what her eyes had said—for everything. Feeling the slow, twisting tentacles of shame.

Then she got her case out and took a cigarette.

"Difficult to get these days," said the barmaid, giving her a light. "And it 's going to be worse, but I dare say we 'll be better without it."

"Yes," said Eve. "I expect we shall."

[THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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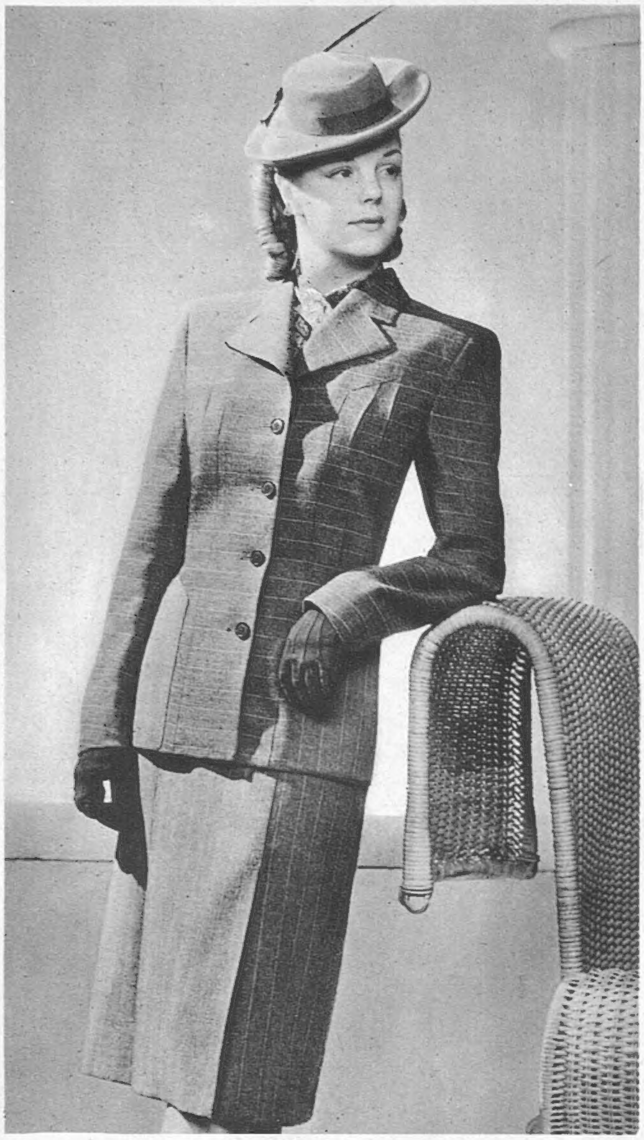
WOMEN IN WARTIME

ALLIANCE OF BEAVER AND OCELOT

WASHING-FROCKS



NOW that spring has arrived, women are turning their thoughts to washing-frocks. As usual at this season, Debenham and Freebody, Wigmore Street, have assembled an excellent collection, which are available in many designs and colour schemes. The one pictured on the right of this page is carried out in eyelet embroidered cotton, showing an original scroll design; the collar is of trubenised white piqué. There are other washing-frocks made of a material which has the appearance of fine flannel and finished with a Peter Pan collar, the skirt being arranged with unpressed pleats. These dresses can be slipped on in the fraction of a second and do not become easily crushed. A feature is likewise made at this establishment of country coats which are well-cut and tailored, light in weight and warm. They are made in a variety of materials.

A VERY interesting Utility Parade of Fashion was recently seen at Simpsons, Piccadilly, and it was given the amusing name of "Count Your Tricks." Many considered that an all-the-year-round wool frock might well be called the "Queen of Trumps," as it may be worn under a coat in winter and without one in the spring and summer. The tailored suit portrayed is a grey striped with a white chalk line: it is a simple and becoming affair that will remain undated indefinitely, for it is indeed a modern classic. This firm have considered the needs of every type of figure and, furthermore, have extended the "Junior Miss" department for those from sixteen to eighteen years of age. In the tailor-made department were sections devoted to suits suitable for town wear and known by the name of "smoothies," those for country wear being entitled "roughies." The firm would be pleased to show the fashions exhibited at this Parade to anyone who visits their salons; they are excellent.

THE days of luxurious furs, frequently styled precious, are over. They included Persian lamb, sable and chinchilla, and they are rarely seen now. Furriers, however, have not been defeated, as they have taken [Continued opposite.

Continued.] hard-wearing furs and treated them in such a manner that they are extremely flattering. The designs are economical, more than one pelt appearing in a single wrap. Molho, 5, Duke Street, Manchester Square, take the credit of the coat portrayed here. It is carried out in ocelot faced with beaver, and is perfectly ventilated, the price being particularly moderate. There is a splendid assortment of wraplets which are as suitable for day as for evening wear. It will be recalled that a short time ago this firm opened millinery salons also at 5, Duke Street, which met with great success, as women like to choose their hats at the same time as their furs. A feature is made of brides' and bridesmaids' models, also for those primarily destined for country wear. These set well down on the head, have small brims which cast becoming shadows across the face.

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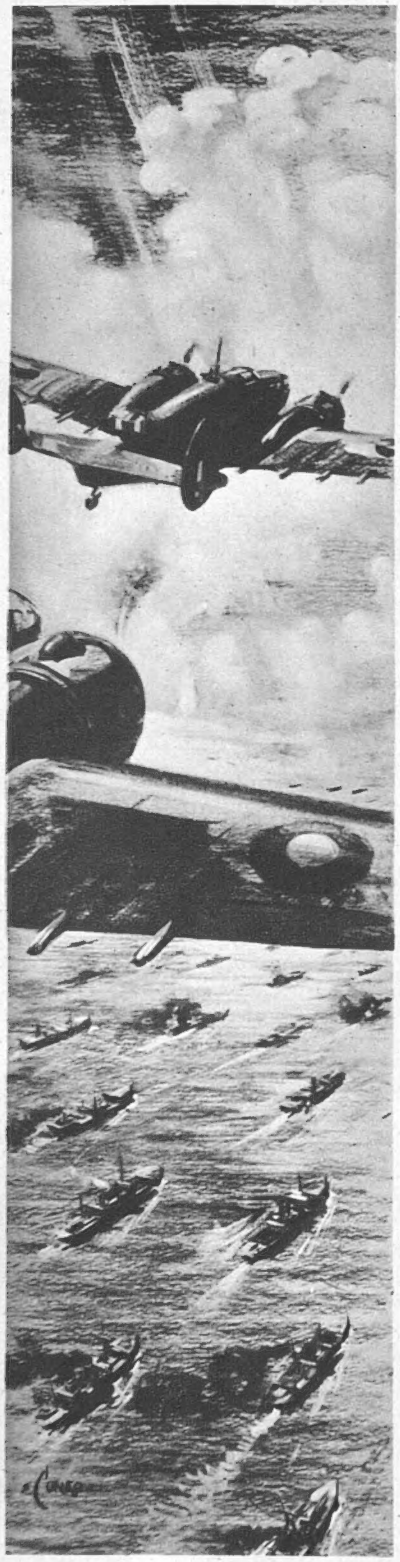

From the ends
of the earth
they come . . . .
our precious ships
and their brave crews
through peril of storm
stalked by wolves
the wolves of the sea —
the U-boats
in packs.
But the Navy is there —
and overhead the planes—
spotting —
bringing the convoy
Home
with its urgent load.
Food, raw materials,
Oil for the tanks,
Munitions —
to feed
the gathering force
of the great assault —
the final blow !
Precious cargoes
precious men — and
the wolves are many.
They multiply
they swarm.
They prowl ceaselessly.
But the convoy
comes home,
for our planes
are overhead
Spotting, swooping,
striking —
guarding the flock.

* * * *

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